

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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P 261400Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7583

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 2245

EXDIS

FOR ASST SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEWT, RO

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MACOVESCU: EXTENSION
OF MFN

REF: STATE 098186

1. SUMMARY: IN MEETING APRIL 23 WITH MACOVESCU, I
RAISED SUBJECT OF SCENARIO FOR EXTENSION OF SECTION 402
WAIVER FOR ROMANIA, NOTING IN PARTICULAR IMPEDIMENTS
WE FORESAW TO SMOOTH PASSAGE BY CONGRESS. MACOVESCU
UNDERTOOK TO SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE TO EXPEDITE
SOLUTION OF "HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS" (READ TO INCREASE
EMIGRATION FLOW) BUT BALKED ON GIVING EQUAL HOPE ON
MARRIAGE SITUATION. HE ALSO STRONGLY CRITICIZED CONTINUED
CONGRESSIONAL FORAYS INTO ROMANIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS (READ
CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN HUNGARIAN AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES).
END SUMMARY.

2. FORTUITOUSLY, YOUR TELEGRAM ARRIVED APRIL 23 IMMEDIATELY
PRIOR TO MY PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER
MACOVESCU (SEE BUCHAREST 2239 AND 2243). AFTER WE HAD
COMPLETED DISCUSSIONS REPORTED ABOVE I TOOK OPPORTUNITY
TO CONVEY IN DETAIL POINTS ENUMERATED IN REFTL, STRESSING
IN PARTICULAR SPECIFIC AREAS OF CONCERN LISTED IN PARA 5.

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3. MACOVESCU RESPONDED THAT HE APPRECIATED VERY MUCH

OUR FRANK ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION. IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT HE FELT THAT WE WORK CLOSELY TOGETHER ON THIS PROBLEM DURING THE NEXT TWO MONTHS IN ORDER TO AVOID WHAT IN MY EXPOSITION I HAD TERMED "THE SANDBARS, ABOVE AND BELOW THE WATER".

4. MACOVESCU SAID HE WOULD "SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE" WITH RESPECT TO A MORE RAPID SOLUTION OF "HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS" IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE DCM AND MITRAN WOULD MEET THIS WEEK TO REVIEW A LIST OF "ILLUSTRATIVE" EMIGRATION CASES THAT WERE OF SPECIAL CONCERN TO INDIVIDUAL CONGRESSMEN.

5. INSOFAR AS MARRIAGE CASES WERE CONCERNED, HE SAID THIS STILL POSED A THORNYER PROBLEM. APPROVALS HAD INDEED BEEN STOPPED FOR SOME TIME. ROMANIA WAS PRESENTLY EXPERIENCING A "MASSIVE RETURN" OF DISENCHANTED OR DIVORCED SPOUSES FROM THE FRG, ITALY AND ISRAEL (NO PROBLEMS WITH THE U.S. WERE CITED, BUT MITRAN SEIZED THE OCCASION TO NOTE THAT THERE HAD BEEN A FEW IN THE PAST). PRESSURES BEING BROUGHT ON THE GOVERNMENT BY THE FAMILIES OF THESE DISILLUSIONED SPOUSES, SOME OF WHOM WERE EXPERIENCING SEVERE HARDSHIPS IN OBTAINING PERMISSION TO RETURN HOME, HAD RESULTED IN A TIGHTENING OF THE INTERNAL REVIEW OF PENDING APPLICATIONS FOR MARRIAGE WITH FOREIGNERS. AS MITRAN PUT IT, IF THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT ACT AS A PROTECTOR OF THE INTERESTS OF INNOCENT GIRLS WHO FELL PREY TO THE RAPACIOUS ADVANCES OF WARM BLOODED ITALIANS ON THE BEACHES OF THE BLACK SEA, WHO ELSE WOULD? I ATTEMPTED, I FEAR WITH LITTLE SUCCESS, TO MAKE THE ARGUMENT THAT AS ROMANIA ENCOURAGED MORE TOURISM AS CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC TIES GREW, AND AS ROMANIA FULFILLED ITS ASSURANCES UNDER THE HELSINKI DECLARATION IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT MORE AND MORE CASES OF FOREIGNERS SEEKING TO MARRY ROMANIANS WOULD ARISE. THIS WAS A FACT OF CONTEMPORARY LIFE WHICH THE GOR HAD TO FACE. I TOLD MACOVESCU FURTHER THAT EARLIER ROMANIAN PROCEDURES WHICH LASTED AT LEAST EIGHT MONTHS SEEMED TO ME ADEQUATE AND THAT IN ANY CASE CONTINUATION OF A COMPLETE STOPPAGE OF MARRIAGE APPROVALS COULD BECOME A SERIOUS COMPLICATION. MACOVESCU SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THIS, BUT THEN ADDED ONLY: "VOM VEDEA" (WE WILL SEE). (COMMENT: MACOVESCU WAS VERY UNCOMFORTABLE
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IN DISCUSSING THE MARRIAGE PROBLEM, PROBABLY IN PARTICULAR BECAUSE OF THE CSCE IMPLICATIONS. I PRESUME CEAUSESCU HAS LAID THE LAW DOWN AND NOTHING WILL MOVE WITH ANY SPEED UNTIL CEAUSESCU FINISHES HIS REVIEW. MACOVESCU'S STATEMENT THAT APPROVALS WERE STILL IN ABEYANCE CONTRADICTS WHAT BOBU TOLD ME SEVERAL WEEKS AGO. END COMMENT).

6. HE THEN TURNED TO THE POINTS I HAD RAISED CONCERNING

TREATMENT OF HUNGARIAN AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES. WE MUST UNDERSTAND ONE THING CLEARLY. ROMANIA HAD SIGNED THE TRADE AGREEMENT IN THE CAPACITY OF AN EQUAL PARTY. HE SOMETIMES HAD THE IMPRESSION THE CONGRESS FELT THAT ONCE ROMANIA BECAME A PARTY TO THIS AGREEMENT IT GAVE THE U.S. THE RIGHT TO PROBE INTO ANY ROMANIAN INTERNAL AFFAIR WHICH STRUCK ITS FANCY. THIS WAS A GROSS MISINTERPRETATION OF FACT. ALTHOUGH HE WAS AT THIS POINT JUST "THINKING ALOUD", AS HE PUT IT, IN A SPIRIT OF OPENNES HE WANTED TO REMIND ME THAT ROMANIA WOULD NEVER TRADE ITS INDEPENDENCE FOR PREFERENTIAL TRADE WITH THE U.S. OR WITH ANYONE ELSE. ROMANIA HAD SURVIVED FOR MANY YEARS WITH MFN AND COULD CERTAINLY DO SO IN THE FUTURE IF THIS PROVED NECESSARY. WE MUST UNDERSTAND IT WAS A CARDINAL ROMANIAN RULE THAT IT DID NOT MIX IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE U.S. HAD WE, FOR EXAMPLE, EVER SEEN ANYTHING IN THE PRESS ON THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE - BEYOND REPORTAGE ON UN DISCUSSIONS? HAD ROMANIAN MEMBERS OF THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY EVER RAISED QUESTIONS ON ANY ASPECT OF THE BLACK ISSUE IN THE U.S.? THE ANSWER WAS NO. BY THE SAME TOKEN ROMANIA DID NOT EXPECT THE U.S. TO MUCK AROUND IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

7. I SAID I WANTED TO RESPOND TO HIM EQUALLY OPENLY. HE MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT MOTIVATES THE CONGRESS TO INQUIRE INTO SUCH MATTERS. ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION SUCH INTEREST WAS TRIGGERED BY A REQUEST FROM CONSTITUENTS, USUALLY FROM INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS WITH BLOOD TIES TO ROMANIA.

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P 261400Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7584

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUCHAREST 2245

EXDIS

FOR ASST. SECRETARY HARTMAN

IN ADDITION THERE WERE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS LIKE SOME OF THOSE WHO ACCOMPANIED SPEAKER ALBERT WHO WERE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS ALL OVER THE WORLD. SUCH INQUIRIES FOR INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN EFFORT TO MIX IN ROMANIA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THEY WERE MADE BY SERIOUS PEOPLE OF STRONG HUMANITARIAN INSTINCT WHO WERE SERIOUSLY SEEKING INFORMATION. I CONSIDERED SUCH INQUIRIES PROPER AND APPROPRIATE AND REFLECTING THE CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEMONSTRATED BY ALL OF US AT HELSINKI. I HOPED, AS IN THE PAST, WE WOULD HAVE THE COOPERATION OF THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT IN THESE EFFORTS. AS EXAMPLES OF WHERE I THOUGHT SUCH COOPERATION WAS IN THE GOR'S INTEREST, I CITED THE ASSISTANCE WE RECENTLY HAD RECEIVED IN OBTAINING INFORMATION FOR CONGRESSMAN HELSTOSKI ON THE HUNGARIAN MINORITIES SITUATION AS WELL AS THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO THE ALBERT DELEGATION. I SAID I ALSO FELT IT IMPORTANT FOR THE ROMANIAN EMBASSY TO RESPOND TO CONGRESSIONAL CONCERNS.

8. MACOVESCU SAID THAT HE HAD NOT INTENDED TO RULE OUT COOPERATION OF THIS SORT. HE AGREED, IN FACT, THAT THIS WAS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST. WHAT HE COULD NOT ACCEPT WAS THE INTERFERENCE BY ANYONE IN THE INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF THIS COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY IF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED WERE REPRESENTING NO ONE BUT THEIR PREJUDICED INTERESTS, AS WAS THE CASE WITH SOME OF THE INQUIRIES ABOUT THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY. WE KNOW, HE ADDED, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHO'S BEHIND THAT (HE OBVIOUSLY HAD HUNGARY AND PERHAPS THE SOVIETS IN MIND). HE HAD NOTHING AGAINST OUR DOCUMENTING ANY PROBLEM. WE WERE FREE TO TRAVEL WHERE WE WISHED AND TALK WITH WHOM WE WISHED. BUT ROMANIA WAS NOT ABOUT TO SELL ITS LIBERTY FOR COMMERCE*

9. COMMENT: THE TIMING OF THE REFTTEL COULD NOT HAVE BEEN BETTER. IN FACT WE WERE JUST ABOUT TO SEND YOU A MESSAGE REQUESTING YOUR ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION AND ADVICE AS TO HOW YOU PLANNED TO PROCEED IN THE RENEWAL PROCESS. I HOPE THAT AT AN EARLY DATE YOU OR JACK ARMITAGE WILL PROVIDE THE ESSENCE OF YOUR MESSAGE TO AMBASSADOR BOGDAN, FOR EVEN THOUGH WE JUDGE THE WAIVER AUTHORITY WILL BE GRANTED I DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE THE ROMANIANS IN ANY DOUBT THAT THE RENEWAL DEBATE WILL BE PRO-FORMA THIS YEAR.

10. DESPITE SOME OF THE RHETORIC THE MOOD OF THE ENTIRE DISCUSSION WAS RELAXED AND FRIENDLY. MACOVESCU TOOK WHAT I HAD TO SAY SERIOUSLY. THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT HE GOT THE POINT. AT THE SAME TIME I SENSED SOME

RESENTMENT AND FRUSTRATION WITH WHAT HE PERCEIVES TO
BE AN ENDLESS PROCESS OF JUSTIFICATION ON
MATTERS WHICH HE FEELS STRONGLY ARE ESSENTIALLY OF
AN INTERNAL NATURE. I CONCLUDE THAT WHILE IT IS
IMPORTANT WE KEEP THE ROMANIANS THOROUGHLY POSTED
ON OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL SITUATION, IT IS ALSO
NECESSARY THAT WE CONTROL THE INTENSITY AND FREQUENCY OF
OUR PRODDING.
BARNES

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